



Leo W. Gerard
International President

June 5, 2014

VIA FAX

The Honorable Vincent Gray
Executive Office of the Mayor
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 316
Washington, D.C. 20004

Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Mayor Gray and D.C. Councilmembers:

I am writing to you in strong support of the bipartisan Congressional request the District has received to name the street in front of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in honor of Nobel Prize winner and dissident Liu Xiaobo.

Yesterday marked the 25th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square Massacre that indelibly etched upon the minds of millions of Americans the vision of China's murderous attack on human rights. The PRC continues to deny its citizens their most basic human rights and simply mentioning democracy, Tiananmen Square, freedom or other terms may subject an individual to policy interrogation, prison, or worse.

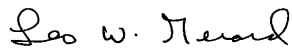
Washington, D.C. is the center of international freedom and democracy. American values, informed by the principles of a democratic society, have given hope to millions and are a beacon and inspiration to people across the globe. The District stands as a monument to our most basic ideals and, indeed, continues to fight for the rights of its own citizens for proper representation in their own federal government. Honoring Dr. Liu will ensure that his cry for democracy will not be forgotten and will be a constant reminder to the Chinese that America will not shy from its responsibilities.

Dr. Liu was sentenced to 11 years in prison for "inciting subversion". That charge was based on his being a democracy activist and his peaceful pursuit of respect for the rule of law and human rights in China. He was earlier jailed after being detained after the Tiananmen Square Massacre and then, later, for his criticisms of China's one-party system. Later, he was a primary author of Charter 08, a pro-democracy manifesto for which he was held by the government once again. His continuous efforts on behalf of his fellow citizens were recognized when he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2010.

The fight for freedom, democracy and human rights depends on people like Dr. Liu and our willingness to stand by their sides. Honoring him by naming the street in front of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China will not only ensure the continued recognition of his work, but will emphasize the basic ideals of the District. The District has taken similar steps in the past, naming the street in front of the Soviet Embassy in honor of Andrei Sakharov. It has also named other places throughout the city in honor of those who fight on behalf of humanity, such as Dimitar Peshev Plaza in front of the Bulgarian Embassy for his efforts to halt the mass deportation of Jews from that country.

I urge you to honor the work of Dr. Liu by naming the street in front of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in his name. Each step will take us closer to the goal of ensuring that all people are able to enjoy their inalienable rights.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Leo W. Gerard".

Leo W. Gerard
International President

LWG/cdk